

angles

WOMEN WORKING IN FILM & VIDEO

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LUISINA BRANDO IN I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT / DE ESO NO SE HABLA

MARIA LUISA BEMBERG

MARIANNE EYDE

LITA STANTIC

DANA ROTBERG

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LATIN AMERICAN FILMMAKERS

When I decided to make movies—without having a clue whether I could or not—I knew I was going to displease many people around me. I knew I was risking breaking my neck, and off I went.

—MARIA LUISA BEMBERG, DIRECTOR
I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT / DE ESO NO SE HABLA

Rebels and visionaries

In this issue, *Angles* celebrates the vibrant, diverse body of work being made by Latin American women. The film and videomakers featured represent several countries and examine a wide range of political, ethnic and cultural concerns.

These resolute women are the kind of transgressors and free-spirits Argentine director María Luisa Bemberg loves to portray in her films. She's broken a few rules herself. In an *Angles* interview, she explains why individual liberty is one of her favorite themes. Also in this issue, Lita Stantic talks about a painful period in Argentina's history; Marianne Eyde reports on the obstacles she had to overcome to make a film about political violence in Peru; Guita Schyfter explores the lives of Mexican Jews; and Dana Rotberg takes an apocalyptic look at Mexico City.

In a report on Cuba's Festival del Nuevo Cine Latino Americano, Dálida María Benfield writes about the influence of Latin America film and video on social movements. Examples include Grupo Proceso, a Chilean media collective that creates work focusing on youth, the environment and women's issues, and the exciting, experimental works of students at Cuba's Escuela Internacional de Cine y Televisión. Benfield, who is the program director of Chicago's Women in the Director's Chair, brought several of these works to its 1994 festival.

Like novelist/screenwriter Laura Esquivel, whose personal essay appears in *Postscript*, these film and videomakers bring women's experiences and observations to what primarily has been a macho tradition. While they come from varied backgrounds with different concerns, they share a commitment to speaking their minds and the willingness to take risks with content and style. And by changing the angle of the camera, they change the way we look at their worlds.

angles

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Angles recognizes the innovative and important contribution women have made and continue to make in the field of film and video. We are committed to bringing readers information and news about the diverse body of work being created by women from all ethnic, cultural and socio/economic backgrounds.

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We are glad to look at video tapes, but will return unsolicited materials only when postage is provided.

● **FROM RUSSIA.** While attending the Toronto International Festival of Festivals, *Angles* editor Elfrieda Abbe talked with Raissa Fomina, director general of Intercinema Agency Ltd., one of Russia's first private film production and consulting firms. Here's what Fomina said about the agency:

"Russia is one of the world's fastest growing markets for film. We offer co-production services, scouting locations, hiring crews, recruiting talent, translating and interpretive services, and consulting services related to Russian law. Our strength is in helping producers place quality foreign programs in cinemas and on television."

In addition, the company will make all visa, travel and accommodation arrangements for those wanting to explore different aspects of filmmaking in Russia.

Fomina said the agency would like to hear from anyone who is interested in organizing a teaching or cultural exchange with Russian filmmakers, teachers and producers. For more information: 15 Druzhinnikovskaya, Moscow 123242, Russia. 7095/255-9052. Fax: 7095/973-2029.

The St. Petersburg International Film Festival, June 19 through 26, is in its fourth year. United States coordinator Anne Borin announced that the festival is accepting short and feature length documentary films under 100 minutes, and animation and short fiction under 60 minutes.

Films submitted must have been completed after Jan. 1, 1992 on 35 or 16mm film with optical or magnetic sound. In addition to the main competition and the out-of-competition sections, this year's event will include "Russia Through Friends' Eyes," films about Russia made by foreign filmmakers.

The entry fee is \$35. If the fee does not cover the shipping costs of full-length features, filmmakers may have to pay an additional amount.

Film entries should be on 1/2" video cassette. Pre-screened cassettes will be sent to St. Petersburg for the final selection. The deadline is April 29.

Filmmakers who are invited to the festival will receive room and two meals a day, but the festival is unable to pay airfare. Cash prizes from \$1,000 to \$2,500 will be given.

For more information: Anne Borin, St. Petersburg Film Festival, c/o Marie Nesthus, Donnell Media Center, 20 W. 53rd St., New York, NY 10019. 212/362-3412.

● **GUATEMALA STORY.** Andrea E. Leland's video, *The Long Road Home*, concerns Guatemalan refugees living in Chiapas, Mexico, the site of a recent uprising by the indigenous people of the region. Leland accompanied 19-year-old Ricardo Hernandez to the refugee camp in Chiapas, where he and his family lived for several years before moving to the United States. With Ricardo as guide, the viewer learns why the refugees had to leave Guatemala, what life in exile is like, and the efforts among the refugees to return home.

According to Leland, refugees began returning to Guatemala last year. "A trend in Mexico that is being picked up by the news media is blaming the Mexican rebellion in Chiapas on Guatemalan and other Central American refugees," writes Leland. "These accusations put Guatemalans in the precarious position of having to defend themselves on two fronts, at home and in Mexico."

Leland developed a study guide and organized a multi-media exhibition to go with the video. The latter includes Nicolas Esteban's naive crayon drawings of village life and its violent dissolution; Kay Berkson and Bo Richards' black and white photographs of Guatemalan refugees living in Chicago and southern Mexico; and Marta Hernandez' traditional hand-built terra-cotta pottery.

The exhibition, which has been shown in Chicago, is currently part of

the "Worlds at Risk" exhibit at the Cambridge Multi-Cultural Art Center in Cambridge, Mass. Two other sites are considering the exhibition for the fall of 1994.

Leland is asking for donations to enable her to distribute the video to the educational market and to give copies to community groups who can use it as a tool for raising awareness and enlisting delegations to accompany refugees home.

The Long Road Home has been shown at the Earth Peace International Film Festival, Chicago Latino Cinema Film Festival, the Big Muddy Film Festival and the Festival Cine Latino. For more information: Andrea E. Leland, 1200 Judson, Evanston, IL 60202. 708/864-7746.

● **HOW TO ORGANIZE A FILM FESTIVAL.** San Francisco-based arts administrator Lauri Tanner is writing a comprehensive resource book, *How to Start and Operate Film & Video Festivals*. Tanner's guide, which will be published by the National Council for the Arts, will cover the following areas: organization, personnel, programming, fundraising, fiscal management, membership, sponsors, special events, premieres, marketing, public relations, audience development, publications and advertising, seminars, festival-filmmaker relationships, putting together touring packages and more. Tanner would like suggestions from those who have organized festivals. For more information: Lauri Tanner, 41-A Coleridge St., San Francisco, CA 94110. 415/550-9445.

● **AFTERSHOCK.** Alexis Krasilovsky, an associate professor at California State University, Northridge, reports that many of her students lost all their possessions in the L.A. earthquake, and classrooms and offices were severely damaged. As part of the coping and healing process, several of Krasilovsky's students are making a documentary about the chaos they face.

Hope in the South Bronx; Xuxamania in Brazil

BY HARRIET ROBBINS

Sheryl Miller's documentary in progress, *I'm Doin' Good*, profiles several young people from the South Bronx. Set against the backdrop of their neighborhood, where drug dealing and violence are commonplace, the subjects talk about their hopes and dreams.

The 12-year project began when Miller was making a film about the work of poet/teacher Suzi Mee. Seven children in her class—four Latino and three African-Americans—were profiled. The filming took place in their school and neighborhood over the span of two weeks. An additional week was spent recording sequences of the children and their families in their homes.

"These children expressed with great candor the normal joys, fears, feelings and imagination of childhood, juxtaposed against the harsh realities of crime, burning buildings, attempted rape, and other atrocities that they witnessed growing up in the Bronx," writes Miller.

With *I'm Doin' Good* Miller follows the growth and development of the seven students from age 12 through age 24. "These young people convey their own powerful expressions of love, friendship and family life. They reveal a strong sense of pride in themselves from having chosen to triumph rather than succumb to the evils of their environment," Miller continues. "The objective of our film is to demonstrate that despite the surrounding conditions, these students were able to make positive choices in their lives."

Miller heads her own production company, Avatar International. She was part of the American peace delegation to Baghdad and covered its activities for "Video Diaries" on BBC2. Her film, *The Road to Peace*, is about solutions to the Palestinian/Israeli conflict. Miller also was on the staff of ABC's "20/20."

For more information: Sheryl Miller, 160 West End Ave., Suite 12N, New York, NY 10023. 212/496-0573. Fax: 212/721-4749.

The Xuxa Show

In a new book, *Xuxa: The Mega-Marketing of Gender, Race and Modernity*, Amelia Simpson analyzes the rise to stardom of Brazil's superstar Xuxa. The story—including her acting career in soft porn movies, posing for Playboy

and her celebrated affair with Pelé—reads like a soap opera, but it's one with political and social significance.

The blond Xuxa reaches millions of people in Latin America and the United States via her children's television show which dictates standards for what constitutes happiness, beauty, and success.

The "Xou da Xuxa" on TV Globo is broadcast in 16 countries in Latin America and on Univision in the U.S. Her empire includes a monthly magazine, clothes, shoes, shampoo, cosmetics, jewelry, school supplies, soup, yogurt and cookies. What propels this success is a persona that combines sex and domesticity, writes Simpson.

"Xuxa is the embodiment of the ideal women, fully dedicated to courting male interest through behavior designed to be sexually stimulating, and at the same time deeply devoted to the task of caring for children. Her caretaker role is enacted literally on the television screen, where she is shown surrounded by adoring children, and symbolically in her role as 'Queen of Kids' and national spokesperson for the Brazilian child. Xuxa's erotic performance on children's television maintains the sex symbol image she developed earlier in her days as a Playboy model and soft-porn movie actress. By stressing the elements of aggressive eroticism and compliant domesticity, Xuxa's narrative affirms dominant views of gender roles."

Why so much attention to a television star? Simpson contends that Xuxa's image registers a history of attitudes about gender and race that are not unique to Brazil. "These attitudes find expression the world over in a variety of manifestations," writes Simpson, who teaches in the Department of Romance Languages and Literatures at the University of Florida. She draws a parallel between Xuxa, Madonna, Barbie dolls, sex toys and the passive, blond feminine ideal that prevails worldwide. The writer touches on gender, race and changing social patterns in Brazil and elsewhere in this amusing, thought-provoking and richly detailed text.

For more information: Temple University Press, Philadelphia, PA 19122. 215/204-8787. Fax: 215/204-4719.



"I'm Doin' Good"

Festival del Nuevo Cine Latino Americano

Cuban festival a cultural eye opener

B Y D Á L I D A M A R Í A B E N F I E L D

The situation in La Habana, Cuba is very hard for the people. The United States blockade has created a serious shortage of goods, including food and medicine, for Cubanos and has affected all forms of exchange between the U.S. and Cuba, including cultural productions. Under these circumstances, folks in the U.S. have little chance to learn about folks in Cuba. Media coverage of Fidel Castro, his fleeing daughter and defecting athletes, overshadows all other aspects of life in Cuba.

In this context, one small way of resisting the blockade is to make attempts to learn more about, and to engage in dialogue with Cuban culture. There are many other ways activists are directly challenging the blockade and organizing against it. All of these efforts are important to changing the situation.

I went to the 15th Festival del Nuevo Cine Latino Americano with this goal in mind, and because it is one of the most important gatherings of Latin American film and videomakers. As a filmmaker and as program director for Women In the Director's Chair, it was important for me to attend the festival. On a personal level, I found the festival was a rare opportunity to be in a community with other Latino film and videomakers, in which we could dialogue and theorize about our specific cultural, political and aesthetic approaches to film and video. Latino cinema has developed what I believe to be the most coherent political and aesthetic theories of film and video in social movements. Yet the history and documentation of Latino cinema over the last 20 years is seriously lacking in film education in the U.S.. This effectively erases the profound effect Latino filmmakers have had on world cinema.

Although Cuba is struggling economically to survive, the Cuban festival was hugely successful because the government places great importance on cultural events. Hundreds of works were screened, including a retrospective of Cinema Novo, a retrospective of Chicano work from the U.S. and a series of works from Holland and Italy. Attendees came from all over the world, and there was a large group of Latino film and videomakers from the U.S. The festival focused on new features, a few by women, from all over Latin America. Among these was a new film by Maria Luisa Bemberg, *De eso no se habla*, which I hope will be distributed in the U.S. because Bemberg is one of the few women from Latin America whose oeuvre North Americans have been able to follow. She is an amazing director of meditative narratives, revealing the inner souls of characters with incredible fluency.

Going to the festival gave me the opportunity to see and select several works that we would show later at the Women in the Director's Chair International Film Festival, which had a special focus on Latina media makers. The following were among those:

La Muchacha (Mexico) by Dora Guerra is about a young woman experiencing culture shock when she goes to work in the city. In *Otoñal* (Mexico) by Maria Novaro, a woman, who lives alone with her mother, creates a fictitious world. *Por la Vida* by Olivia Olea (U.S) presents the stories of Latino immigrants who sell goods on the streets of Los Angeles.

Chilean Ximena Arrieta has been working in Santiago with a collective video production group, Grupo Proceso, for about 10 years. Since the fall of the dictatorship, the group has been creating videos which focus on youth, the environment, women's issues and human rights. What impresses me most about the work is the group's obvious commitment to rigorous political analysis, covering a wide range of topics, and their productivity. Arrieta has produced more than 30 tapes in the last five years, all of them covering different aspects of the cultural and political lives of the Chilean people. An example is *La Historia Tiene Nombre De Mujer*, which documents the women's movement in Chile.

WIDC also presented a program of works by the Escuela Internacional de Cine y Television, located just outside La Habana. This internationally attended and recognized film school features such teachers as Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Tomas Gutierrez Alea and Julio Garcia Espinosa. The films and videos, all by women, are fantastic. It is student work in the best sense of the word: exploratory, risky, original, smart and true to these women's experiences. For financial reasons and because the works generally are not screened in the U.S., much of this work does not have English subtitles. WIDC exhibited the works in Spanish as an affirmation that for thousands in the U.S. the language is a primary form of communication. I hoped the works would challenge non-Spanish speaking festivalgoers to try to learn some Spanish, so they also could traverse borders and engage in cultural dialogue.

Dálida María Benfield, a film and video-maker, is the Program Director of the Chicago-based Women in the Director's Chair. This article is an edited version of a longer piece that originally appeared in Chair Chat, a Women in the Director's Chair publication.

Toronto International Film Festival of Festivals

Human rights from diverse perspectives

BY ELFRIEDA M. ABBE

During the Toronto International Film Festival of Festivals lines of avid moviegoers weave their way from movie to movie, starting as early as 9 a.m. and ending well after midnight. For 10 days you live on popcorn and sodas, cappuccino and muffins, and grilled sausages sold by street venders. You might take time out for a real dinner at a restaurant but not without a pang of regret. What great film are you missing? Forget the glitz and glitter — though there are plenty of celebrities to gaze at — this festival is about seeing movies.

This year there were more than 300 films — mostly full-length features with some shorts — from 45 countries. About 70 films were by women, representing 23% of the program. Hopefully this figure will go up. Canada has a strong tradition of funding filmmakers, which may be why women accounted for 43% of the films in the special Canadian program.

While it prides itself on the absence of hype, a certain amount of it is inevitable at Galas and Special Presentations. Films and filmmakers in these categories get a lot of media attention. Jane Campion's *The Piano* was the only film by a woman in the group of 27. On the other hand, you're more likely to discover new directors — or at least directors whose work you rarely have the opportunity to see — and find challenging or surprising work in other sections: Contemporary World Cinema, which according to the catalog, "takes the pulse of the social, political and economic changes in each country and culture"; The Edge, described as the unconventional, oppositional and innovative; and First Cinema. Women made about a fourth of the films in these categories. Toronto also had an excellent selection of international works by women, especially in the Asian and Latin American segments.

From Tracey Moffatt's Aboriginal and Irish ghost stories in *Bedevel*, to Beth B's disturbing portrait of a mother in *Two Small Bodies*, to Sylvia Chang's melodrama *Mary From Beijing*, to Nancy Savoca's quirky tale, *Household Saints*, content, style and themes were diverse. But

human rights issues surfaced in several films, especially those from Latin America.

Hoping that history won't repeat itself, Lita Stantic addresses the issue of bearing witness to past atrocities and injustices in her semi-autobiographical *A Wall of Silence/Un muro de silencio*. The multi-layered, somber story focuses on Sylvia, played by Ofelia Medina, who is trying to go on with her life years after her husband, and father of her child, disappeared and presumably was murdered by the military regime.

Painful memories surface when a British director (Vanessa Redgrave) begins making a movie based on the young lovers' story. The director, who wants to bring this brutal history to the attention of a younger generation, is confounded by Sylvia's refusal to delve into her past. The relationship between Sylvia and her daughter is especially poignant. The mother eventually realizes that in trying to protect her daughter she is shutting out an important part of her past. *A Wall of Silence* is Stantic's first feature film. She has produced several works for Maria Luisa Bemberg.



"Shadow of Doubt/L'ombre du doute"

With *You Only Live Once/La vida es una sola*, Peruvian director Marianne Eyde examines the effects of never-ending political violence on family and community. Her story takes place in the Andes, where a peasant village is terrorized first by the Peruvian military and then by Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso) rebels. Family members and old friends are torn apart by these opposing factions.

Tragically, children are taken away from their families and forced to join the rebels. Those who resist and attempt to stay together face the danger of being killed by one side or the other. Eyde's courageous work is the only Peruvian film to tackle this controversial material.

Individual freedom, a recurring theme in Maria Luisa Bemberg's films, is the focus of *I Don't Want To Talk About It/De eso no se habla*. It tells a magical story of Charlotte (Alejandra Podesta), a charming, unusual child with a physical characteristic that sets her apart from others. This is never mentioned by her mother

(Luisina Brando), who imposes her will on the entire village, forcing them to remain silent on the subject. When the talented, engaging Charlotte becomes a young woman, an older man (Marcello Mastroianni) falls in love with her and they marry. But the independent Charlotte finds her protected life stifling and seeks her own destiny.

Children at risk in a dangerous world were the focus of several films. The most stunning was Aline Issermann's *Shadow of Doubt/L'ombre du doute*, an insightful exploration of incest. The resistance I had to seeing a movie about this disturbing topic soon gave way to admiration for the director, a passionate and innovative filmmaker. Issermann's gripping story shows the confusion, terror and strength of a young French girl—in a remarkable performance by Sandrine Blancke—who accuses her father of sexual abuse. The thoughtful movie examines the psychological, sociological and pathological aspects of the case as it shows the dynamics that allow the abuse to occur, including the mother's denial, the insensitivity of the authorities in dealing with the girl, the frustration of the social worker in bringing the truth to light, and the girl's fear of testifying against her father. It is only when the youngster realizes her father is abusing her little brother that she is courageous enough to tell her story.

Writer/director Issermann, driven by her desire to help sexual abuse victims, makes the point that in France, children in such cases are rarely believed by court authorities. She speaks for reform in this area. Her movie is imaginative and lyrical and in no way sensational or preachy, but an absorbing study. And while the viewer's sympathies are firmly with the girl, the father is not depicted as a stereotypical villain. Issermann gets at the core of sexual abuse by showing the roots of his behavior.

At the time of publication, *Shadow of Doubt* had no North American distributor. In addition to the festival, it was shown in Toronto as a fund-raiser for the Canadian Institute of Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy. This thoroughly researched, beautifully done film deserves to be seen by a wider audience.

Striking a much different mood, is Lina Wertmüller's *Me Let's Hope I Make It/Io speriamo che me la cavo*, an edgy comedy about a town in Naples, where family and school have disintegrated as a result of crime and vio-

lence. A dedicated school teacher faces Dickensian conditions as he tries to get truant students back in school. Underlying Wertmüller's biting humor are the tragic consequences of poverty—children who find crime a way of survival.

Clara Law, returning to Toronto, makes a strong anti-war statement with *Temptation of a Monk*, an epic story of Chinese warlords. The tale takes place in 626 A.D. during the Early Tang Dynasty. A brilliant general, who betrays the prince he serves, is pursued by his rival, resulting in bloodshed. The general takes refuge in a Buddhist temple where strict abstinence from worldly pleasure is demanded, and begins a long road to enlightenment. This is Law's sixth film. It's in striking contrast to *Autumn Mood*, a minimalist abstract sketch of two rootless youths seeking the meaning of life in Hong Kong, which was shown last year. Her eye for color, composition and well-choreographed movement create a distinctive style.

Other works by women included:

When Pigs Fly (U.S./Ger-

many) is Sara Driver's whimsical tale about a pair of ghosts, a jazz musician, a go-go dancer and a guy who gets what's coming to him. In *From the East/D'est* (France/Belgium/Portugal) Belgian director Chantal Akerman records her impressions on a journey from East Germany to Moscow.

Yolande Zauberman's *Me Ivan, You Abraham/Moi Ivan, toi Abraham* (France) re-creates the world in a Jewish shtetl on an estate in Eastern Poland in the 30s. In this simple story a Jewish boy and a Christian boy decide to run away together.

Several directors attended the festival, including María Luisa Bemberg and Lita Stantic, Argentina; Marianne Eyde, Peru; Clara Law and Sylvia Chang, Hong Kong; Aline Issermann, France; Chantal Akerman, Belgium; Tracey Moffatt, Australia; and Beth B, Janice Findley, Nancy Sovaca, Sara Driver and Tamara Jenkins, U.S.

For more information: Toronto International Festival of Festivals, 70 Carlton St., Toronto, Ontario M5B 1L7. 416/967-7371. Fax: 416/967-9477.

Interviews:

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Marianne Eyde, page 16

Montreal World Film Festival

Was it the year of cross-dressing?

BY KATHRYN PRESNER

As the summer of 1993 cooled into fall, Montreal cinemas filled to bursting with locals, tourists and international media here for the 11-day Montreal World Film Festival. The choices were daunting: more than 240 films from 60 countries. Thirty-two features and less than a dozen shorts were directed or co-directed by women—a better record than in past years, but still a disappointing proportion, considering the total volume of entries. Many women were screening their first feature film. The following are some of my impressions.

Did someone declare this the Year of Cross-dressing and forget to tell me? No fewer than a half-dozen films in the festival—narrative and documentary—featured men or boys who dress as women. What could explain this phenomenon? No one seems to be sure, but the popularity of *The Crying Game* and Jennie Livingston's *Paris Is Burning* doesn't hurt these films' chances of commercial success.

Lois Siegel's *Lip Gloss* (Canada) is a wry documentary focusing on female impersonators. In candid interviews, the participants reveal intimate—often painful—details about their lives. Their openness and self-deprecating humor make an engaging 70 minutes.

Split: William to Chrysis, a Portrait of a Drag Queen (U.S.), co-directed by Ellen Fisher and Andrew Weeks, is a posthumous look at a flamboyant New Yorker who once counted Salvador Dali as a close friend. Unfortunately, poor video camera work, and sound recording turn a large number of talking heads into tedium.

Paule Baillargeon's *The Sex of the Stars/Les sexe des étoiles*, the Quebec feature that opened the festival, won the festival prize for best Canadian film. It's the moving story of Camille, a 12-year-old girl coming to terms with her relationship with her father, who is—you guessed it—a transvestite. "Nature sometimes makes mistakes," he tells his despondent daughter. "Sometimes a woman is born in a man's body."

A second recurring theme in films by women was male abandonment. Portrayals of men who leave a sympathetic female protagonist alone, or with their child, were common to at least eight features. The parting is never mutual. Some of the men are killed, others commit suicide, still others leave for another woman or for unexplained reasons. Unlike most Hollywood movies, these films—originating from countries as diverse as Italy, Peru and India—offer no happy endings, no Prince Charm-

ings. The women simply carry on with their lives, without male companions.

Margarethe Von Trotta's *The Long Silence/Il lungo silenzio*, an Italian/French/German co-production, was voted the most popular film by festivalgoers. The story centers on the loving relationship between Carla, a gynecologist, and her husband Marco, a judge fighting corruption. We follow their lives as Marco investigates an intricate arms-running network in Rome, while Carla worries about his safety. She understands that they must be careful, but she's also tired of all the elaborate security precautions—such as a pack of bodyguards with Uzis that follow them everywhere, even on a romantic holiday by the sea. When Carla's worst fears are confirmed and her husband is assassinated, she takes the courageous step of speaking out publicly against violence and corruption, encouraging others to do the same.

Before screening the film, Von Trotta told the audience, "I hope you won't be too depressed. I want to inspire hope as well."

Set amidst the Saturday Night Fever craze of the late 1970s, Patricia Mazuy's *Travolta et moi* (France) is a bittersweet tale of adolescent infatuation and game-playing. Seventeen-year-old Nicolas thinks that to have a girl, all you have to do is to want her. To prove it, he bets his buddy that he will sleep with the third girl who gets on the bus. The unwitting victim turns out to be 16-year-old Christine, who quickly falls under the spell of the philosophizing Nicolas. The movie's soundtrack evokes a specific era, but its evocation of the pain of first love is timeless.

Canadian filmmakers aren't renowned for their talent at producing slick, sexy, suspense thrillers. Usually, we leave that to the Americans. Surprise, surprise. Toronto director Gail Harvey breaks this tradition with her stylish film, *Cold Sweat*. The story follows a hit man who's forced to face his conscience when the ghost of one of his "hits" comes back to haunt and taunt him. With its unpredictable plot twists, *Cold Sweat* kept me guessing—and laughing. An unforgettable fluorescent body-painting sex scene stands out. Harvey, a former UPI and set stills photographer, describes her second feature as "an erotic thriller with overtones of black comedy."

Emma Joan Morris and Jerret Engle's documentary *Something Within Me* (U.S.) is an inspiring look at an im-



"Something Within Me"

poverished elementary school in the South Bronx that's found a new lease on life, specializing in music and arts education. The students, mostly African-American, are witty and wise beyond their years, having grown up fast in one of the city's most crime-ridden, drug-plagued areas. At St. Augustine's School of the Arts, they confide in dedicated teachers and counselors who help the kids express themselves musically. They may not be virtuosos, but they all learn piano, voice, dance and a second instrument. The outstanding camera work deserves to win an Oscar for best documentary cinematography—if there is

Interview:

Guita Schyfter, page 12

such a category.

Mexican director Guita Schyfter's *Bride To Be/Novia que te vea* traces the friendship of two Jewish girls growing up in Mexico in the 1960s. Based on the book of the same name, the film sees college-age Oshinica, with Sephardic roots in Turkey, befriend Rifke, who is of Ashkenazy background. Each of their families expects them to follow the socially acceptable route of the time: to marry a Jewish boy of the same ethnic background and social class as their own. But it doesn't work out that way. Cultural conflicts abound, but the resolution is hopeful. *Bride To Be* is a well-crafted work by a first-time feature director.

Friends (South Africa/Great Britain) is another film with female relationships as its central theme. Director Elaine Proctor, a native South African, also wrote the script for this moving tale of three women's lives intersecting in turbulent Johannesburg. Buddies since college, Thorko, a black teacher; Aninka, a white archeologist; and Sophie, a white librarian and ANC activist, live together. Set during the volatile period from 1985 to 1990, *Friends* probes racial and political tensions that flare among the three when the struggle to abolish apartheid reaches its peak. Kerry Fox, who played author Janet Frame in Jane Campion's *An Angel at My Table*, gives a brilliant performance as Sophie. It would be a shame if Proctor's film were not given wide distribution.

One Nation Under God (U.S.) uses traditional documentary techniques to expose as false the notion that homosexuals can and should be "cured" of their "disease." Co-directors/producers Francine Rzeznik and Teodoro Maniaci take a historical look at the multitude of meth-



Roger Dufresne photo

"The Sex of the Stars/Les sexe des étoiles"

ods proffered by psychiatrists, right-wing politicians and self-described Christians to convert "unhappy" gays and lesbians into heterosexuals. A parade of so-called "ex-gays" earnestly tell us how the willing homosexual can "recover" from their affliction with a little bit of dedication and hard work. The film effectively follows the journalistic axiom: "Let your interviewees hang themselves by their own words."

The Dark Days/Los años oscuros (Spain) by Arantxa Lazcano's is the story of Ixtiar, a serious 8-year-old girl growing up with a Basque nationalist father and a puritanical mother in post-war Spain. The film skillfully conveys a tense political climate from a sensitive child's perspective played by the extraordinary Eider Amilibia.

Other features by women included Ildiko Szabó's *Child Murders/Gyerekgyilkoss agok* (Hungary), about a 12-year-old boy who seeks revenge against his tormentors; Pilar Miró's *The Bird of Happiness/El pájaro de la felicidad* (Spain), about a woman who tries to escape the demands of her life to pursue art; and Elena Tsiplakova's *In Thee I Trust* (Russia), in which a young woman gives up her baby and then goes to work in an orphanage to ease her guilt.

Kathryn Presner is a filmmaker and freelance writer living in Montreal.

Latin American Filmmakers



I Don't Want to Talk About It/De eso no se habla

María Luisa Bemberg

In praise of transgressors

BY ELFRIEDA M. ABBE

In Argentine director María Luisa Bemberg's *Camila* (1984), a young woman from an upper class family commits a forbidden act when she falls in love and elopes with a parish priest. Subsequently, the two are hunted down and executed. In one scene of this melodrama, set in the 19th century, the woman's mother is the only one courageous enough to speak out against the injustice and cruelty of their fate. With this scene, Bemberg alludes to the brave Argentine mothers who were the first to speak out against a military regime that had murdered or tortured their sons and daughters.

Camila is an example of how Bemberg, an internationally renowned director, takes a specific story or circumstance and relates it to a broader social concern. Personal and social repression, transgression and liberty are recurring themes that run through her work. Her recent film, *I Don't Want to Talk About It/De eso no se habla*, like earlier works, centers on an intelligent, rebellious woman who breaks away from a repressive environment. Based on a short story by Julio Llinas, it's the first film she's directed using another writer's material. Charlotte, played by Alejandra Podesta, is an engaging young woman with a distinctive physical characteristic that her domineering mother doesn't want anyone to mention (Bemberg asked that we not give it away here). In fact, she terrorizes the whole town into silence. Marcello Mastroianni is a worldly older man who falls in love with the charming Charlotte and marries her. But Charlotte finds her protective environment in this little seaside town stifling and seeks her own destiny.

Bemberg's leading women — like Charlotte — are rebellious and courageous, ready to break the rules for personal freedom. There's a bit of Bemberg in all her characters. Her own rebellion began when she started making films at age 58. She had divorced her husband after raising four children and pursued filmmaking as a way to express her concerns. Using her own money to launch what has become an illustrious directing career, she wrote several screenplays before making *Moments/Momentos* (1981), about a woman's adulterous affair. *Camila*, her most commercially successful film here and in Argentina, is based on a true story. *Miss Mary* (1986), with Julie Christie, reflects Bemberg's upbringing in an upper-class family. This taleaux of life among the wealthy in the 1930s comments on

a stagnant patriarchal society and the kind of blind arrogance that lead to Perónist politics.

Probably her most ambitious work, *I, the Worst of All/ Yo, la mas pobre de todas* (1989), tells the story of the 17th-century Mexican nun and poet Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz. It was included in a retrospective of Bemberg's films presented by The Film Center at the School of the Art Institute in Chicago. The screening of this film, which has no U.S. distributor and can only be seen at festivals and special events, was co-sponsored by Women in the Director's Chair 13th International Film and Video Festival, with a focus on Latina film and video makers.

I Don't Want To Talk About It was shown at the Toronto International Film Festival of Festivals. The film is being distributed by Sony Pictures Classics but a release date hasn't been set. Bemberg spoke with me about her work while attending the Toronto festival and in a follow-up phone interview while she was in Chicago.

Elfrieda Abbe: You asked that we not talk about the physical characteristics that make Charlotte, the central character in *I Don't Want To Talk About It*, distinctive. Why not?

María Luisa Bemberg: I notice that people who go to see the film not knowing anything about [Charlotte] enjoy it much more. I can tell you it's a tale more than a story. It begins... Once upon a time in a far away Argentina, in the 30s, in an invented town by the water there lived a little girl... It happens before television, before psychoanalysis, before Perónism, and, of course before feminism. It's my favorite film because it has many readings — it's a love story, it has humor, it has poetry,

drama, passion. It's my most difficult film because it's a very risky subject. For Charlotte, reality and fiction criss-cross. For me, [Charlotte's decision at the end of the movie] is an act of freedom, of assuming her own identity. But really the last line of the film is written by each spectator.

EA: You've said that individual rights — the right to be yourself, the right to be different — is one of your obsessions.

MLB: There's a wonderful phrase in one of Walt Whitman's poems. I read it in Spanish; I don't know how it goes in English — "May nothing exterior rule in me" — something like that. Not to be influenced, not to be manipulated, not to be told what you have to do. I'm taking that to extremes with *I Don't Want To Talk About It*.

EA: How much of your own experiences are reflected in your work?

MLB: Everything, I guess. One's work is the result of one's education, influences, pressures and cultural connotations. But the work is never autobiographical. I can't imagine anything more boring than talking about myself. But it comes from me. In a way they are very personal films. I remember a phrase from [Robert] Bresson. He said, "Tell a story only you can tell," a personalized outlook of something. If it's to say something many other people can say just as beautifully or better, then I'm not very interested. What I like is to change the angle of the camera, have my own personal outlook which is not the mainstream.

EA: How did you start making films?

MLB: In the first place, I like to believe I'm a good example for older people to realize it's never too late to begin something. I began when I was 58. But I think I was always a filmmaker since childhood. I wrote stories, which were illustrated with little close-ups and words underneath, dialogues. They were my first story boards. I used to improvise with puppets. I used to direct my sisters and cousins in plays. But I think like many women of my generation, I didn't take myself seriously. I never thought or imagined that what a woman might have to say would be important. When I decided to make movies, without having a clue whether I could make them or not, I knew I was going to displease many people around me. I knew I was risking breaking my neck, and off I went.

EA: Was there any one thing that helped you make that leap? To change your life?

MLB: There were many things. One was the reading of Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*. She expressed beautifully what I felt but didn't know how to analyze. Another book that opened a lot of doors in me was Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*. That and a thought of [Andre] Malraux, which says one has to live out one's ideas. So I said, "I'm not living out my ideas. I'm just bitching and boring everyone. Do something about it." So I wrote a short play I felt could make a good movie. I wrote the script and participated in the shooting of the film. It was autobiographical, *Chronicles of a Lady/Crónica de una señora*, for director Raul de la

Torre. When I got to this cinema set I was riveted. I felt this is what I like, this is where I belong. I was caught from then on.

As a scriptwriter, I realized that it's absolutely impossible for any man to understand the new awareness of women even if they want to be understanding. It's never the same. Then I decided if I really want films to express what I'm writing, I will just have to go behind the camera. I began for ideological reasons, political reasons. I was sick of seeing the derogatory image of women on the screen, mostly made by men — not all of them, of course. There are marvelous exceptions. But generally women are pretty boring. They always have the second role, the gags. My idea was to have leading women characters. They would be assertive. They would be strong. They would be transgressors. They would be free. I got more loosened up doing these images until I finished my last film — *I, the Worst of All*, about this fabulous Mexican poet and nun. I can't think of a better role model for women. I wanted to find a true, personal voice.

EA: You've said that if women make movies the way men do, they might as well stay home. Could you elaborate on that?

MLB: Well, it's not exactly that. Who am I to say what they can or cannot do. Of course, I think it's desirable that if women make movies they try and help bring the

changes so necessary to end the patriarchal society and to have an egalitarian society in which men and women come to terms with each other, where men would not be abusing women and exploiting them and women would not be exploiting men and trying to get money out of them. It would be something a bit more decent and respectful of each other.

EA: Do you consider yourself a feminist?

MLB: By all means. I think any woman who says she's not a feminist is either a coward or a fool. I wouldn't be giving you this interview if we hadn't had these consciousness-raising groups in which we all helped each other to grow. We all shared the same kind of problems. That insecurity was the dragon we had to kill within ourselves, if we wanted to be ourselves. It's just the beginning. It's just a drop in the sea. You can't change millions of years in 20 years. But I don't militate any longer. The best way for me to be a good feminist is to make good movies.

EA: What are the most important issues for you now?

MLB: My most important issue is to make another movie, then another one. I have a couple of ideas. My life is very quiet now. I'm conscious of my priorities. I'm not a young woman anymore and I'm very cautious with the energy I spend. I know the price of being free is to be solitary. Now my top priority, apart from my family, is to tell stories. At this time in my life, I'm no longer interested in seducing people. I want to convince them.

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"The best way for me to be a good feminist is to make good movies"

Guita Schyfter

Insights from an outsider

BY KATHRYN PRESNER

At the 1993 Montreal World Film Festival, I spoke with Mexican director Guita Schyfter about her film, *Bride To Be/Novia que te vea*. The story follows Oshi and Rifke, two young Jewish women growing up in Mexico City during the early 1960s. Conflicts arise when they dare to challenge their families' conservative traditions. Rifke, an Ashkenazy Jew, breaks a taboo by falling in love with a gentle boy. Oshi, of Turkish Sephardic background, wants to study art at the university instead of getting married without an education. Told in flashback, the film follows Oshi and Rifke's struggles as they grow into womanhood in a rapidly changing world.

Bride To Be recently won the audience prize at the Guadalajara Film Festival, and was well received at San Francisco's Jewish Film Festival. It has not yet been commercially released in Mexico. In Montreal, it proved so popular with audiences that an extra screening was added.

Born in Costa Rica, Guita Schyfter's parents immigrated from Eastern Europe; her father from Poland, her mother from Ukraine. She studied psychology at a Mexican university and stayed in Mexico upon graduation. After in-service training at England's Open University, she took an apprenticeship in educational television at the BBC and began working in the field in Mexico. She then moved into documentaries, and from there, into fiction. *Bride To Be* is Schyfter's first feature.

Kathryn Presner: Has this film caused any controversy in the Jewish community?

Guita Schyfter: This is the first [Mexican] film that deals with the Jewish community—or with Jewish characters. The Jewish people I know who have seen it liked it. The authorities of the Jewish community did not support the film. I don't like to talk about the community as a whole, because there was a group of people who helped me economically as investors in the film. It's a small group, but they were all Jews. So, I don't like to generalize. I asked permission to film a synagogue. The president of the Ashkenazy community said I couldn't film anywhere because there was an intermarriage in the film. And he talked to other Jewish communities. He said to me, 'I know [intermarriage] happens, but I cannot lend you my synagogue because this is dealt with in the film.'

KP: So you found another way?

GS: You know all these things are very personal. Many irrational and subjective and emotional things go into it. The Mexican [Jewish] community is divided into the Ashkenazy and the Sephardic communities. Each has their own cemetery, schools, synagogues, rabbis, everything. And I'm talking about 50,000 to 60,000 people. Not

more than that. There's not an exact figure, but it's a small community. Each community has its own president and the three presidents come under one president of what is now called the Central Committee. The president of the Central Committee—it sounds like the old communist party, but it's not—is the brother of the Rosa Nissan who wrote the book [on which the film is based]. And he was also against the book. Because he did not like the way it portrayed his family. It's a book about a lit-

tle girl who is born and grows up in Mexico. It's the story of Oshi Mataraso, and is partly autobiographical. There are things that if you know the family, you can recognize. And if you're the brother, I guess you can recognize even more. So he was very against the book. Of course, when the film came out, he also talked to the other communities, so the film was not supported.

KP: Did that make things difficult?

GS: Yes. First of all it was very sad for me because anybody who read the script or saw the film can see that there's nothing they should not have supported. I wanted to film in an old, beautiful synagogue in Mexico City, in the downtown. But it was not possible. So I had to change a couple of scenes around because I was not allowed to film in the cemetery either. It hurt me more personally that they would take this attitude than not having those locations, which you can always change or invent.

KP: Can you talk about the meaning of the title?



"Bride To Be/Novia que te vea"

GS: *Novia que te vea* is an expression in Ladino. When the Jews were thrown out of Spain 500 years ago, they took Spanish with them. So in those 500 years, Spanish has remained with its 16th-century roots. Ladino now has words in Hebrew, and from other places where these Jews have been. The Sephardim in Turkey incorporated words in Turkish and the ones in Greece in Greek. What it means is "I should see you married" or "I should see you a bride or a groom."

KP: One of the things that struck me about the xenophobia expressed by some of the characters in your film is that the same thing is happening today in Quebec. It's 1994, and this fear of differences still exists.

GS: This is not only happening in Quebec. This is happening all over. In the United States, now, they're afraid of all those people coming in. I never had an idea of all these issues. They came out naturally. I wanted to make a film about how it felt to be part of a cultural minority. And all the inside fights that I have had—that I think that anybody who belongs to a cultural minority has had—about how you have to forget about your personal heritage in order to belong. That conflict, that's what I wanted to talk about. And it seemed that all of a sudden, there was an eruption in the world, where all this was happening.

KP: You started your film career by making documentaries, and this is your first feature. What made you switch into fiction?

GS: My documentaries usually dealt with historic things, or the vision one culture has of another culture. That's what I like because I have always felt like an observer. I never felt I was part of the historical heritage of different countries.

In Costa Rica, when I was a little girl and studied the history of Costa Rica, and they said "Then, the Spanish came" and then, "He was our president..." I never felt that had anything to do with me. So I became an observer.

After I read one book called "Conversations with [Isaac] Bashevis Singer," where he gives advice to writers, I took it for myself. He says, "If you want to write anything that's worthwhile, look into your own roots." This had a very big impact on me, because I had never really thought about my own roots. This was eight years ago. I asked, "What are my own roots?"

I decided that I would make a script dealing with this. When the script was finished, I submitted it to the Instituto Mexicano de Cinematografía. When they accepted it, then I was very scared. I started developing the script, and I realized how many characters were in this film. All kinds of people come and go. I said, "No, no, no. I won't be able to do this." But it was too late to run away. I had to stay.

It was difficult. I had to work with a big group of people. I'd never had such a big crew. On documentaries, it's much smaller, and you choose the people you want to work with. The unions came in. You have to make a lot of compromises. You have to look for people who have had experience in feature films. So I could not work with friends I had worked with before. All these people I had to meet and start working with. That was the hardest problem. Working with the actors was very easy. That's what I remember as the greatest pleasure.

KP: How long did you shoot and what was the budget?

GS: Six weeks, \$1.2 million something like that. In the United States and Canada some people laugh at that much money.

KP: In the U.S. and Canada there still aren't that many women directors. They're out there, and they're making headway, but they're still a very small number. I'm wondering what it's like in Mexico?

GS: There are many women film directors in Mexico. Fifty years ago, there was one woman, Matilde Landeta. I think she had a very hard time. For a long time, she was not able to do anything, but once women began taking their place outside the house, and participating in politics, and in the professions, they also started participating in film. Now there are many women directors in Mexico. There's not enough money for all of us to make our films. There are six or seven women who have made a film in the last couple of years.

KP: Did you have a hard time convincing people that you would be capable of directing this film? As a first-time director, as a woman?

GS: I think many people were surprised that the whole thing ended, and that it came out well. People inside the crew, I'm sure. They don't say it, but probably they doubted. Of course, I even doubted myself. I was always afraid that something would happen. I had one objective: I had to finish in six weeks. It was very difficult at times, but we finished on time and within the budget.

KP: In addition to the Instituto Mexicano de Cinematografía, how did you get the film financed?

GS: I had a government loan, which is very, very low interest. I had 10 investors. I thought I could raise much more money than I did. I thought I would get much more help from the Jewish community, which I didn't—except this group of 10, most of them friends and their friends and people from companies who I had worked with before on my documentaries. Many services were donated.

Dana Rotberg

Angel of Fire

BY JORGE RUFINELLI AND LAURI TANNER

Translated by Lauri Tanner

Dana Rotberg's second feature, *Angel of Fire/Ángel de fuego*, was shown at the 1993 San Francisco International Film Festival where she was interviewed. Rotberg described her film as "the story of people wandering about in Mexico City in search of a god that watches over them. But their god is often cruel and demands the sacrifice of the innocent."

Lost innocence is the fate of a teen-age girl who performs with a down-at-the heels circus. Abandoned by her mother, she has an incestuous relationship with her father, who is a circus clown. The story in the film deals with the themes of sacrifice and redemption. In the festival catalog Miguel Pendas wrote: "Dana Rotberg's deceptively laconic cinematic technique, and art direction that draws on the chaotic, sensuous palette of the streets of Mexico City, give Angel of Fire the flavor of 'outsider' art, a startling vision, painstakingly constructed from humble materials. The vision is unforgettable."

JR: Did you have something in mind about the almost purely Mexican significance of the fire-eaters?

DR: Certainly! The fire-eaters are these characters that inhabit Mexico, really for centuries. The most terrible thing is that they have turned around to become part of the urban landscape with a really strong presence, from little kids to grown men, like an army of unemployed, who stop at street corners to spit fire for just a few pesos. In my mind, I wanted to use [something] that all of us inhabitants of Mexico City know on a daily basis in order to transport my film in some way to people. And it also really helped me to visually and dramatically use this symbolism.

JR: It seems that in the film, you deal with not only religious beliefs — Mexican or not, they could be universal — but with fanaticism — that is, when beliefs reach a limit implying suffering. What's your opinion of that fanaticism?

DR: Well, exactly what you are pointing out. What interested me a lot was religious thought, like the absence of God. But this was also a vehicle for speaking about the issue that any totalitarian thought that excludes the free exercise of thinking and action by human beings inevitably is going to lead to death — death of the senses, of the mind or of the body. It's a reflection on any type of totalitarian idea, whether it's ideological, religious, or whatever, it ends by destroying, inevitably.

JR: I see a type of apocalyptic feeling and imagery, not only from the final fire, but throughout the film, including the "landscapes," all that rusty machinery. That machinery caught my attention because we could associate it with something like what the imagery of Los Angeles might be in the year 2000 or so, but we're talking about Mexico. Also I could associate it, for example,

with the railroads in Mexico, which were considered a symbol of progress and now are a symbol of decadence, like an obsolete Mexican industrial plant.

DR: You know the worse thing is that it's not all in my imagination. It's what is really there. That's what is here in Mexico now. It's already reached this point, as of years ago, and really, at least in terms of the urban space in Mexico, 80% of Mexico City is like this. People know the Paseo de la Reforma, Mexico City's main boulevard, with its wonderful skyscraper stock exchange offices, its hotels and restaurants, but the rest...just 10 minutes from this modern progressive area, is what we see in the film. The movie, in set design terms, doesn't have any work to it. All is done on real time, and we filmed everything as it is. And certainly, with complete intention. Mexico is living on absolutely apocalyptic

Lita Stantic

Lita Stantic, who produced films for several Argentine directors, including Maria Luisa Bemberg and Fernando Solanas, had no particular desire to direct until she co-wrote the script for *A Wall of Silence/Un muro de silencio*. "I needed to direct this specific story," said Stantic during an interview at the Toronto International Film Festival of Festivals. Along with her co-writers Graciela Maglie and Gabriela Massuh, Stantic retells a wrenching story, based in part on her painful experiences during Argentina's military regime.

Stantic uses a multi-layered narrative structure to show how the past and present are intertwined. The story centers on Sylvia (Ofelia Medina), who is trying to rebuild her life and find happiness with her new husband and her daughter, the child of a brief, first marriage. Her apparent tranquility is disrupted when a British filmmaker (Vanessa Redgrave) comes to Buenos Aires to make a film based on an episode in Sylvia's past. When she was student, Sylvia was briefly married to a man who was among the thousands who "disappeared" while the military was in power. He is the father of her daughter, but Sylvia, in trying to protect the girl, has not told her of this history. The filmmaker's presence forces Sylvia to reclaim her history for herself and her daughter.

"Some parts of the story are autobiographical. My daughter's father disappeared. The phone calls and the

levels, in all senses, in terms of the immediate quality of life of the people there. It's a visual part that we just don't see in the cinema. It's a space that's completely excluded from our visual cinematographic imagery, and which for me was fundamental to show — not only as an act of denunciation, but as the specific space in which this story takes place. It couldn't be anywhere else, even though this happens everywhere. But actually, the thing was to look for the desert, no? The space that could have been green, but it wasn't. It's completely dried up, lifeless, left in ruins. They didn't even fix it up, or protect it, or reconstruct it into something else. It's been abandoned. It's really that: the profound sensation of abandonment that exists in Mexico City.

JR: To continue with this visual theme, I'd like to ask you about how you chose the colors and tones for the film.

DR: We worked a lot on the color in the worlds that we were recreating in fictional terms: the circus world on one hand, and the world of the puppeteers on the other. In that way we really got involved in the color design. The intention was to create a special imagery and fit it into this completely documentary form.

We worked on the color in many ways. For example, of Refugio's world, where we worked a lot with the colors of El Greco's paintings, which I love and am fascinated by. They're deeply religious and ecclesiastical colors. We worked a lot with them in that sense. On the other hand, the circus world — I wanted to create in some way an image like a type of stained glass window from a church. That tent was so old that the light was re-

flected through the plastic sheets that were worn out. When I went into that tent for the first time, it gave me the sensation of going into a church, the effect of the stained glass.

LT: Do you have any words of advice to share with the members of Cine Acción, and Latino filmmakers here in general?

DR: First of all, to keep their identity. I mean, don't try to make your films to be like American films if you don't want to. Remain true to your colors, to your own way of storytelling, even if you don't have a happy ending, and even if you have to say tough things. Do it. That's the only way that we really have to have a little guts and vision.

LT: How do you see yourself within the worlds of Mexican and Latin American cinema at this time?

DR: I'm absolutely a Mexican filmmaker. My first contact with films were those of Mexico. All my subjects and my passion are in Mexico, and I will remain a Mexican filmmaker all my life. That's what I care about. In relation to Latin America, well for sure, we have common roots and common problems. We struggle to fight together. Certainly, we have a common sense of reality.

Jorge Rufinelli is a professor in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at Stanford University. Lauri Tanner is currently working on a book about film festival production and management. Parts of this interview were published in Cine Acción News. For more information: Instituto Mexicano de Cinematografía, Atletas No. 2, Colonia Country Club, 04220 Mexico D.F., Mexico.

scene where Sylvia meets her husband in the bar are autobiographical. From the moment he disappeared, we were separated. After this I never saw him. The story is very near to me because I live in Argentina and was very involved with the Perónists youth. I waited many years to make this film, and it was hard to write the script. The hardest part now is to show *A Wall of Silence* and wait for the approval of the person who writes the reviews." Though she has produced 25 films and worked on publicity for others, Stantic doesn't like promoting her own work. "It's a very personal film, and it's difficult for me to approach a seller and speak about it."

The director's motivation came from her desire to bring this important part of Argentine history to the attention of her daughter's generation. Like others who lived through the period of military power, Stantic, for many years, did not talk about it. "My daughter knew that her father disappeared when she was 11 — in 1982. I told her he was dead in an accident because I was in Argentina, and I was afraid she would speak to another person about what had happened. The fear was very strong."

"*A Wall of Silence* has had a good reception with young people, because today in Argentina people of my generation don't speak with their sons and daughters about this history," she said. This issue is addressed in the movie, when the daughter tells her mother, "I don't want more silence."



Director Lita Stantic

Stantic understands the reluctance of some Argentines to see her film. Many feel like Sylvia, she said. They just want to get on with their lives. As one character in the movie says, "People don't want to know about this now, at this moment, in Argentina."

The filmmaker empathizes with this point of view, but what happened must not be forgotten, she said. "If we don't insist with memory, history will repeat."

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Marianne Eyde

You only live once...

Peruvian director Marianne Eyde's film, *You Only Live Once/La vida es una sola*, depicts the brutality and violence of both the Peruvian military and the Shining Path guerrillas, and their effects on a mountain village. Its contents are so controversial, the release of the movie was delayed a year. "Some say the film is an apology for the Shining Path. Others say it is too much in favor of the military," said Eyde during an interview after the screening of her film at Great Lakes Film and Video Latin American Film Festival in Milwaukee. She has traveled tirelessly in North America and Peru to promote the film. The director welcomes the criticism as a sign that the movie is doing what it's supposed to do—raising discussion. The situation is slowly improving, but violence has become so much a part of daily life, people have become inured to it.

"How far should we get used to it?" asked Eyde. "I think it's very good that there is this discussion. This film makes you think about the problems. The evening news has descriptions but no reflection. A feature film gets you emotionally involved."

Eyde, who was born in Norway, has lived most of her life in Peru and studied communications at the University of Lima. Before taking on the risky business of making a film about the complex political situation in Peru, she directed several documentaries, short films, and a feature, *Los Ronderos*.

In *You Only Live Once*, both the military and the rebels terrorize a once tranquil but poor village in the highlands of Rayopampa in the Andes, forcing villagers to take sides against their wishes. Florinda (Milagros del Carpio) is a young woman who falls in love with a student (Aristoteles Picho) visiting the village before she realizes he is a member of the Shining Path. She chooses to join him and finds that when she turns her back on her family and community, she is capable of doing things that before would have been unthinkable, leading to tragic consequences.

Eyde and her crew—including Diana Cabrera, executive producer; Michele Andre, editor; Rosa Maria Oliart, sound engineer; and Cesar Perez, cinematographer—had a feeling of solidarity while making the film, but they didn't always agree. It was a collaborative effort, built on listening to and understanding each other's ideas and points of view, rather than the director dictating what should be done. How can you make a film about the mis-



Marianne Eyde

use of power if you're perpetuating a power relationship as the director? Eyde asked. "The method you use has to have a relationship to the result you want."

Making the film was a struggle on many fronts. The director and crew had to walk two miles, carrying the heavy cameras and sound equipment, to reach the village of Choachin where they filmed. Since the area was an "emergency zone," they had to get special permits from the military in order to work. While on location, the actors and technicians lived in the local schoolhouse—one classroom for women and one for men. Originally the story was set in the present, but Eyde was forced to change it to 1983 in order to get past the censors. And at least one actress had problems getting parts after the film because of its subject matter. Once the film was finished, it took a year to get permission to release it in Lima, and then only one cinema owner agreed to show it.

Eyde continues to try to raise the money to pay off the debt incurred making the film. She estimates 100,000 Peruvians have seen *You Only Live Once*. It also was shown at the Toronto International Film Festival of Festivals, the Chicago Latin American Film Festival and Sundance. The Spanish version is distributed in the U.S. by Laguna Films.

With its gritty, documentary-like style, *You Only Live Once* engages viewers on a visceral level. The actors, who are either from street theater groups or are non-professionals from the village, give the film an unsettling real-life quality that is impossible to shake. While the story takes place in a remote area far away from city streets, the message resonates universally. Violence, wherever it occurs, whether social or political, is destroying family and community life.

"You always hear of human rights related to death. Human rights should be the right to live a decent life. Violence is not only death, it's the disintegration of society, the economy, culture, values, even everyday life," said Eyde.

You Only Live Once will be shown at the Philadelphia International Film Festival, May 3-10; The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, May 10-20; and festivals in Santa Fe and Hawaii this summer. For more information: Kusi Films, Godofredo Garcia 140, San Isidro-Lima 27, Peru. 51-14/226005. Fax: 51-14/402838.

—Elfrida M. Abbe

Piano etudes

Those distinctly female evocations contained in 19th-century novels by women, of the sensual prison of Victorian life, have never really come to the screen until now, and never with the veil of physical and political inhibition removed. [Jane] Campion has cast a new, eerily beautiful light on the sexual politics of the gothic, and she has plunged the story even deeper into sexuality's twin, the creation of art.

—Pat Dowell, "Smothering Heights," in *These Times*, Nov. 29, 1993.

There is always something of the Christian martyr story—the same tone of ecstatic victimization—in the gothic romance. The

Piano strikes me as an especially garish case. Ada is as surely betrayed by her daughter as Christ is by Judas, and, like a long line of female saints before her, she resists an arranged marriage, repels sexual assaults, endures bodily mutilation with head unbowed and gaze unaverted, and embraces death. The ending is different, of course, Ada is not burnt or dismembered, and when she has a chance to drown, she changes her mind. But despite the secular updating, certain scenes in her story are positively medieval.

—Carol Clover, "Ecstatic Mutilations," *The Threepenny Review*, Spring, 1994.

Since the '70s women have been unearthing forgotten literary

works, creating an alternative cultural canon, reinterpreting male texts and forefronting experiences deemed peripheral. The desire to articulate this forgotten past is perhaps the common impulse behind such ostensibly diverse works as Jean Rhys' prequel to *Jane Eyre*, *Wide Sargasso Sea*, A.S. Byatt's *Possession*, Sally Potter's film version of *Orlando*—and Jane Campion's *The Piano*, which empowers Ada with a 1990s strength and self-knowledge that enable her to transcend the limitations of such disempowered 19th-century heroines as Emily Brontë's Catherine.

—Stella Bruzzi, *Women and Film: A Sight and Sound Reader* (Temple University Press).

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Camille Billops (*Finding Christa*), **Julie Dash** (*Daughters of the Dust*), **Leslie Harris** (*Just Another Girl on the IRT*) and **Ngozi Onwurah** (*The Body Beautiful and Coffee Colored Children*) were among the panelists at Black Cinema: A Celebration of Pan-African Film at New York University. For more information: New York University, 25 W. 4th St., New York, NY 10012-1199. 212/998-6797.

Sian Evans received several awards for her film *Home Is Where The Heart Is*, an experimental documentary about definitions of home. The awards include: Silver medal for experimental film at the Danubiale Festival, Krems, Austria; First Prize for experimental work at the Artswatch Festival in Louisville, Kentucky; First Prize for experimental documentary at the Image Festival in Atlanta, Georgia. The film also was shown at MOMA. For more information: Sian Evans, 235 Berry St., Brooklyn, NY 11211. Phone/Fax: 718/388-8404.

The late actress **Lillian Gish** established a \$1.2 million trust fund for the Museum of Modern Art's Department of Film to continue its work in saving silent films. The trust fund is to be used for acquisition, preservation and storage of films starring Lillian and Dorothy Gish, and films directed by D.W. Griffith as well as related research and publications.

In addition to many of her films that have been preserved, such as Griffith's *Way Down East* (1920), future works to be preserved include the Biograph Studio shorts directed by Griffith and his feature-length films, such as *Broken Blossoms* (1919), starring Gish. In their legendary collaboration, Lillian Gish and Griffith made 45 films together, and it is largely due to her efforts that Griffith donated his films and papers to the museum in the early 1940s.

Gish also directed. Her comedy, *Remodelling Her Husband*, starred Dorothy and was distributed by Paramount. Lillian Gish was born in Springfield, Ohio, in 1893, and raised in East St. Louis and New York City. Her father abandoned the family and died in 1911. Gish moved with

her mother and Dorothy to an apartment in New York. To save money they took in boarders, one of whom was an actress who convinced Mrs. Gish to allow 5-year-old Lillian to perform in a play touring the country. Another boarder, Mary Pickford, introduced Lillian and Dorothy to Griffith at Biograph. Gish received an Honorary Academy Award for her contribution to the progress of motion pictures in 1970. She died in 1993.

In commemoration of the 100th anniversary of her birth, The Museum of Modern Art presented a series of her films last fall. For more information: MOMA, 11 W. 53rd St. New York, NY 10019-5498. 212/708-9400.

Isabel Hill, film commissioner for South Carolina, was a panelist for a session on crisis management at Cineposium, the annual meeting of the Association of Film Commissioners International in Los Angeles.

Audrey Hope featured **Shri Mataji Nirmala Devi** on her cable program *Reel Women*. The segment focused on women's spiritual development. For more information: Audrey Hope, *Reel Women*, 213/850-8588.

Nancy Mercado was named artistic and program director of Worldfest Houston. In that position she will be responsible for the selection of invited entries for the Houston (April) and Charleston International Film Festivals (November). Mercado is a playwright and filmmaker.

A retrospective of **Jeanne Moreau's** work was shown at the Museum of Modern Art. Moreau worked with directors such as Luis Bunuel, Jean Renoir and Michelangelo Antonioni. She recently appeared in *The Summer House*. For more information: The Museum of Modern Art.

Laurie Parker, producer of *Even Cowgirls Get the Blues*, *The Rapture* and *My Own Private Idaho*, was a panelist on the Independent Feature Project/West program, "Writing for Independent Film: What's the Writer's Role?"

Friends and Enemies, produced by **Christine Purse** and **Dirk Blackman**, won the Gold Medal Award for best first fea-

ture at the Houston International Film Festival.

Several film and videomakers were honored at The Northwest Film & Video Festival. **Joanna Priestly's** *Grown Up*, a humorous animated film on the joys and sorrows of reaching middle age, was second in the audience favorite category. Priestly is from Portland. Judge's Awards were given to Seattle filmmaker **Kathryn Hunt** for her documentary about a homeless family, *No Place Like Home*; Seattle video artist **Marilyn Davie's** *Ablutions*; and **Patricia Gruben's** feature length essay on her family history, *Ley Lines*.

For more information: Northwest Film Center, 1219 Southwest Park Ave., Portland, OR 97205-2486. 503/221-1156. Fax: 503/226-2848.

The Native American Public Broadcasting Consortium awarded grants to 11 public television productions. The projects include:

Pepper's Pow-Pow, produced by **Sandy Johnson Osawa** (Hilohitsa), Seattle, Wash., is a personal storytelling approach to reveal the musical innovations of Jim Pepper who blends Native American music and jazz.

The Salmon People, produced by **Kathryn Oneita** (Sioux) and **Chris Johns**, Seattle, Wash., explores the relationship between a boy and his grandfather who fish on ancestral grounds and see industrial pollution. The boy learns more than fishing techniques.

In the Wake of the Flood, produced by **Elizabeth J. Theobald** (Cherokee), New York, New York, is a one-hour documentary which explores the effects of the Garrison Dam project on the oral histories of the Three Affiliated Tribes of Fort Berthold, North Dakota.

Courage and Culture: The Lisa Tiger Story, produced by **Nedra C. Darling** (Potawatomi), Santa Fe, New Mexico, profiles a Cherokee/Creek woman who is HIV positive.

For more information: Native American Public Broadcasting Consortium Inc., P.O. Box 83111, Lincoln, NE 68501. 402/472-3522.

in progress

LeAnn Erickson is working on a historical documentary, *From One Place to Another: The Emma Goldman Clinic for Women*. The clinic in Iowa City celebrated its 20th anniversary in September, 1993. The video is a diary format and covers the founding, organization and survival of the clinic as a political collective. Erickson raised \$9,500 for the project, \$3,000 from the Iowa Arts Council and \$6,500 from Film in the Cities. Also working on the film are co-director **Camille Seaman** and sound designer **Jennifer Masada**. The documentary is in the initial editing stage.

Lexy Lovell is working on a documentary, *Riding the Rails: Children of the Great Depression*. In 1932, U.S. government estimates reported more than 250,000 boys and girls as "homeless wanderers." Using the common thread of their travels on freight trains, the film will tell the story of these children's lives between 1928 and 1940. In the last year, with the help of newspapers and magazines such as *Modern Maturity*, Lovell and her co-producer, Michael Uys, have received more than 2,500 letters from former boy and girl tramps, who wish to share their experiences. After phoning nearly 500 of the best subjects, the producers have narrowed the field to 40. Though they still need further funding, the producers will begin shooting interviews in March and April. Studs Terkel, Robert Coles and Howard Zinn are among the advisors on the project. For more information: Lexy Lovell and Michael Uys, The American History Project, 300 Hicks St., Brooklyn, NY 11201. 718/260-8012.

Third Eye Media Group is producing a series of videotapes on labor and the arts. The first tape will focus on issues within the media arts community. Interviews with those who have worked to develop unions or spearheaded personnel policy reforms will be included. The tapes will be distributed free to media arts organizations, serving as a progressive organizing tool for workers to establish regulatory policies in the areas of health benefits and contracts. For more information: Third Eye

Media Group, c/o Labor & the Arts, 103 Greene Ave., No. 2, Brooklyn, NY 11238. Phone/fax: 718/789-0633.

in distribution

Labor at the Crossroads is a non-profit production company which has created more than 25 programs about critical issues for working people, including strikes, health care and free trade. Among its titles are: *Out at Work: Lesbians and Gay Men on the Job*; *No More Band-Aids: Curing the Health Care Crisis*; *Daily News Is Bad News*; *Workers Without a Voice: New Immigrants*; and *Fenced Out: Tomkins Square Park and Homelessness in NYC*. **Kelly Anderson** and **Tami Gold** are producer/directors. For more information: Labor at the Crossroads, 695 Park Ave., Rm. 340N, New York, NY 10021. 212/772-4129.

Maggie Hadleigh-West walked down a New York City street last summer with her Super-8 camera and every time a man whistled, leered, made catcalls or comments at her as she passed, she turned the camera on him. The result is a 20-minute documentary, *War Zone*, about street harassment. Hadleigh-West walked the streets more than seven hours, during which time she experienced street abuse—from verbal to physical—112 times.

"Street abuse occurs on a continuum," she said in a New York Daily News article. "Some gestures are more heinous than others, but they're all intimidating. A man is imposing himself on a woman's space uninvited, as if he owns the street. It's not a mutual interaction. Street abuse is debilitating to women. We can never feel safe. There's always the threat of sexual and physical violence."

The film shows Hadleigh-West walking down the street and then turning her camera on the surprised men who react in a variety of different ways. Some are angry, some make jokes, others look away. We never hear what they say, only Hadleigh-West's comments about how it feels to be harassed on the street. *War Zone* stirred so much controversy Hadleigh-West was invited to appear on the "Today Show," "Eye to Eye with Connie Chung," "Sonia Live," "All Talk Cable Network," the "Bertice Berry Show" and "Mornings on Two." Articles about the film ap-

peared in USA Today, Dagens Nyheter (Sweden), The Daily News, the San Francisco Examiner and New Woman Magazine.

In an upcoming sequel, Hadleigh-West confronts men with a microphone as well as a camera. Responses, she said, ranged from violent rebuffs to denials of wrongdoing.

For more information: Film Fatale, 212/260-5774.

Diane Kitchen has completed *Roots, Thorns*, which she filmed with the Ashaninka people of eastern Peru. The film deals with the people's everyday life while contemplating their uncertainties and fears of the unknown. It shifts between the fears found in daily life and those brought on by the country's current political turmoil and other forces from the outside. The underlying focus is the intimate relationship the people have with the land. For more information: Diane Kitchen, University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee Film Department, Mitchell Hall, Milwaukee, WI 53211. 414/229-6015.

Tanto Tiempo, written and directed by **Cheryl Quintana** **Leader**, tells the story of a young Mexican-American woman, Mia and her Mexican mother, Luz, who abandon their heritage to adapt to an American lifestyle. Confronted with her past, through various means, Mia rediscovers the value of her Aztec ancestry and brings it and Luz back into her life. The film won the 1992 Best Short Fiction Film award at the Chicago Latino International Film Festival. For more information: Indivision, 1820 S. Bundy Dr., Suite 4, Los Angeles, CA 90025. 310/207-8897.

Success Avenue: Watts, Los Angeles by **Donna Mungen** contrasts the 1960s hope and activism with the complex social issues of the 1990s. It centers around Pete, the director of a neighborhood youth center. As a foot-soldier from the peace generation, Pete struggles to save a susceptible youth attracted to the traps of the street. Mungen is a regular commentator on National Public Radio's "All Things Considered." For more information: Bottom Line Productions, 632 W. Palm St., Altadena, CA 91001. 213/684-8048. Fax: 818/797-6856.

Women Make Movies
new address:

Women Make Movies Inc.
462 Broadway, 5th Floor
New York, NY 10013.

The Canadian Filmmakers Distribution Centre is distributing seven new programs centering on lesbian and gay themes. The programs are: "Laughing at Love," exploring the rocky terrain of relationships; "Faces of Passion," revealing different aspects of lesbian sexuality; "Two Decades: Part One and Two," a tour of diverse gay and lesbian identities in the past two decades; "Pandora's Box," a grab-bag of experimental films covering a wide spectrum of lesbian and gay concerns; "Archival Treasure," featuring *Winter Kept Us Warm*, the first gay film from England; and "A Tribute to Jack Smith," including films about the legendary Canadian performer.

For more information: Canadian Filmmakers Distribution Centre, 67A Portland St., Toronto, Ontario M5V 2M9, Canada. 416/593-1809.

Women Make Movies is distributing an award-winning multi-cultural collection of films and videos about women writers, such as Toni Morrison and Alice Walker. The following works are also included:

Beyond Imagining: Margaret Anderson & the Little Review

(1991, film, 30 min.) by **Wendy L. Weinberg**. The film documents the life of a bold visionary who founded the Little Review in 1914 and featured such writers as Gertrude Stein, Emma Goldman, Djuna Barnes and Ezra Pound.

Hidden Faces (1990, film, 52 min.) by **Claire Hung/Kim Longinotto**. Originally intended as a film about the internationally renowned feminist writer Nawal El Saadawi, the documentary develops into a portrayal of Egyptian women's lives in Muslim society.

I Is a Long-Memored Woman (1990, video, 50 min.) by **Frances-Anne Solomon/Ingrid Lewis**. Based on award-winning poems by Guyanese British writer Grace Nichols, this film is a chronicle of slavery through the eyes of Caribbean women.

For more information: Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, Suite 503, New York, NY 10013. 212/925-0606. Fax: 212/925-2052.

angles

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deadlines

Walt Disney Studios Fellowship Program. Deadline April 15. Walt Disney Studios is searching for new creative talent. The fellowship is open to all writers with a focus on hiring African Americans, Latinos, Asians, Native Americans and women. Writers with WGA credits are eligible for the program. A \$30,000 salary will be provided for one year. Write or call for application. For more information: Brenda Vangsness, Program Administrator, The Walt Disney Studios, 500 S. Buena Vista St., Burbank, CA 91521-0880. 818/560-6894.

CPB Meeting Financial Assistance. Deadline: April 22. Funds are available to provide limited financial assistance on a competitive basis to producers and directors of culturally diverse programming to participate in the 1994 Public Television Meeting June 3-6 in Orlando. For more information: Yoko Arthur, Corporation for Public Broadcasting, 901 E. St. NW, 3rd Fl., Washington, DC 20004-2037. Call, Shelley Danzy, 202/879-9794.

Short Circuit Film Festival. Deadline: May 1 (Paris). Showcases American short films for European market. Selected works are offered exclusive distribution in Europe and a first-look contract for first features. Films must not have been shown anywhere in France previously. The festival will be in July in Monaco and October in Paris. Entries must be sent on NTSC scan VHS tape with dialogue transcript and SASE. For more information: Short Circuit Elendil Prod., 853 Broadway, Suite 1118, New York, NY 10003. 212/473-8980.

Parnu Visual Anthropology Festival and Conference. Deadline: April 30. Seeks work that supports the cultural survival of peoples or records cultures in a human, social, historical or ecological context. Formats: 33 and 16mm, 3/4" and 1/2" tapes for preview. The festival is July 3-10. For more information: Parnu I.V.A. Society, P.O. Box 150, Parnu, Estonia. 372/444-3869 or 372/444-0804. Telex: 173/134 ESTO SU.

Margaret Mead Film and Video Festival. Deadline: May 1. Seeks anthropological and ethnographic film and video, sponsored by the American Museum of Natural History. Possible themes: shamanism and trans-nationalism. Emphasis on

non-Western cultures. All formats accepted for preview but VHS preferred. The festival is Oct. 12-18. For more information: Margaret Mead Film and Video Festival, American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th St., New York, NY 10024-5192. 212/769-5305. Fax: 212/769-5329.

Touring International Music Video Festival. Deadline: May 1. Seeks diverse forms of music videos. Entries must have been completed before Jan. 1, 1993. Formats: 3/4", 1/2" and 16mm. For more information: Johnny White or Carolyn Faber, Chicago Filmmakers, 1543 W. Division St., Chicago, IL 60622. 312/384-5533.

Film Arts Foundation Grants. Deadline: May 6. The San Francisco-based media arts center seeks proposals for films and videos, especially short, personal works that can be completed on the grant amount and other adventurous projects that have little chance with traditional funding sources. The program makes awards in three categories: personal works, project development, and completion/distribution. For more information: FAF, 346 9th St., Second Floor, San Francisco, CA 94103. 415/552-8760.

NEA Media Arts Program. Deadline: May 7. Assists media arts centers in multi-purpose exhibition and production/post-production centers. Matching grants range from \$10,000 to \$75,000. For more information: NEA, Nancy Hanks Center, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506-0001. 202/682-5452.

Sinking Creek Film/Video Festival. Deadline: May 10. Seeks 35 and 16mm film and 3/4" video in all genres. The festival also seeks proposals for video installations to be part of the festival Nov. 8-13. For more information: Sinking Creek, 402 Sarratt, Vanderbilt, Nashville, TN 37240. 615/332-4234.

Leipzig International Documentary Film Festival. Deadline: May 15. Promotes international documentary and animated films. Formats include 16 and 35mm, U-matic and Betacam SP video. The festival is Nov. 15-20. For more information: Leipzig International Documentary Film Festival, c/o The Field, 161 6th Ave., 14th Fl., New York, NY 10013. 011/49-30-782-8702. Fax: 011/49-30-782-9740.

Brazen Images: Women in Film. Deadline: May 20. Festival: July 22-25. Formerly the Third Wave International

Women's Film and Video Festival. Seeks films and videos from women. The Regional Showcase includes works from women in Texas and surrounding states. For more information: The Women's Media Project, P.O. Box 49432, Austin, TX 78765. 512/473-2766. Fax: 512/472-1043.

Women in Film Foundation Grants. Deadline: May 30. Seeking applicants for several grants for films or videos made by women on the following concerns: disabilities, discrimination, women and children in war, solutions to local or global environmental issues. Grants are also available for interactive video and post-production and completion grants for women based in Los Angeles. For more information: Send SASE to Women in Film Foundation, Film Finishing Fund, 6464 Sunset Boulevard, Suite 530, Los Angeles, CA 90028.

Troubadours Fest. Deadline: May 31. The first annual film/video fest showcasing non-profit, non-competitive independent projects by Christian artists. Formats: 16mm and Super-8 and VHS. The festival is Sept. 1-4. For more information: Cathedral Productions, Fest, 171 Langton St., No. 5, San Francisco, CA 94103. 415/863-5201.

Pioneer Fund Awards. Deadline: June 1. Grants to emerging West Coast documentary film and videomakers. Student projects ineligible. For more information: Film Arts Foundation, 346 9th St., 2nd Fl., San Francisco, CA 94103.

Barbara Deming Memorial Fund. Deadline: June 30. Offers grants to individual feminists whose work speaks for peace and social justice. Grants are usually under \$1,000. The Gerty Arts Award is for a work by a lesbian that gives voice to the lesbian sensibility and confronts homophobia. The Fannie Lou Hammer Grant is for a woman whose work combats racism and celebrates women of color. For more information: Money for Women/Barbara Deming Memorial Fund, P.O. Box 40-1043, Brooklyn, NY 11240-1043.

Chicago Resource Center. Aug. 31. Funds non-profit lesbian and gay advocacy efforts and some media projects. Funding is done throughout the year so proposals stand a better chance if sent before the cutoff date. For more information: Chicago Resource Center, 104 S. Michigan Ave., Suite 1220, Chicago, IL 60603. 312/759-8700

festivals

BACA/The Brooklyn Arts Council's Film and Video Festival. March-April, New York. Categories include: animation, documentary, experimental and student. For more information: Rob Orlinick, BACA, 195 Cadman Plaza West, Brooklyn, NY 11201. 718/625-0080.

Videoscape: An Asian American Video Showcase. April, New York. Categories include: narrative, documentary, animation and experimental. For more information: Videoscape, Asian Cine Vision, 32 E. Broadway, 4th Fl., New York, NY 10002. 212/925-8685. Fax: 212/925-8157.

Cleveland International Film Festival. April 7-17. Showcasing an annual survey of contemporary filmmaking from around the world. For more information: Trisha Kusner, Cleveland Film Society, 6200 S.O.M. Center Rd., #C20, Cleveland, OH 44139. 216/349-0270. Fax: 216/349-0210.

Humboldt International Film Festival. April 11-16, Arcata, California. Set in California among the giant redwoods, the festival is in the oldest operating feature film house in the country, the Minor Theater. Humboldt, the oldest run student festival in the country, showcases student and independent filmmakers. For more information: Humboldt International Film Festival, Theater Arts, Humboldt State University, Arcata, CA 95521. 707/826-4113. Fax: 707/826-5494.

World-Fest Houston International Film Festival. April 15-24. Categories include: features, documentaries, TV commercials, experimental, TV production, student film, screenplay, short subjects, music videos. For more information: Worldfest-Houston, P.O. Box 56566, Houston, Texas 77256-6566.

Labortech '94 International Labor Film and Video Festival. April 22-24, Minneapolis. Current historical documentaries, dramas, video essays and diaries in all lengths and formats. For more information: International Labor Film and Video Festival, Labor Education Service/University of Minnesota, 468 Management and Economics Bldg., 271 19th Ave., South, Minneapolis, MN 55455. 612/625-5546.

First-Run Film Festival.

April 24-May 1, New York City. Will feature the student works of Nancy Savoca, Oliver Stone, Martin Brest, Spike Lee and Jim Jarmusch. The festival will be at Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St., New York, NY. For more information: New York University, 25 W. 4th St., New York, NY 10012-1199. 212/998-6797.

Animation Festival, New

York University Tisch School of Arts. April 29, New York City. A showcase for student artists. Serious social commentary, sight gags and flights of fancy abstractions are included in the program. Techniques range from cels to claymation, scratch-and-paint on film to computer generated designs. For more information: New York University, 25 W. Fourth St., New York, NY 10012-1199. 212/998-6844.

Human Rights Watch Film

Festival. May, New York City. The event showcases over 50 fiction, documentary and animated films/videos and works-in-progress that focus on human rights issues. For more information: Bruni Burres, Programmer, Human Rights Watch Film Festival, 485 Fifth Ave., 3rd Fl., New York, NY 10017-6104. 212/972-8400.

University of Oregon Queer Film/Video Festival.

May, Eugene, Oregon. Featuring films and videos pertaining to lesbian and gay issues. Categories include: experimental, documentary, narrative/drama and animation. For more information: Student Resource Office, EMU Suite 2, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403. Call Debby Martin 503/346-4375. Fax: 503/346-4400.

Rochester International Independent Film and Video Festival: Movies on a Shoestring.

May 5-8, Rochester. Accepts works of amateurs no longer than 30 minutes. For more information: Movies on a Shoestring, Box 17746, Rochester, NY 14617. 716/454-6664.

Birmingham International Educational Film Festival.

May 6, Birmingham, Alabama. Categories include: business and commerce, cultural & ethnic studies, early childhood education, environmental issues, fine and performing arts, geography & history, guidance & counseling, health education & physical education, and social issues. For more information: Birmingham International Educational Film Festival, c/o Film Library, Birmingham Board of Education, 410 S. 13th St., Birmingham, AL 35233. 205/250-2711.

Athens International Film and Video Festival.

May 8-13, Athens, Ohio. Categories include narrative, documentary, experimental and animation. For more information: The Athens Center for Film and Video, Box 388, Athens, OH 45701. 614/593-1330.

New England Film and Video Festival.

May 12-14, Boston. Features films and videos: narrative, documentary, animation, and experimental. For more information: NEVF, Arts Extension Service, Division of Continuing Education, 604 Goodell Bldg., University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA 01003. 413/545-2360.

National Educational Film and Video Festival and Conference.

May 17-22, Oakland. Showcases films, videos and interactive media productions. Conference events include a national media market with 40 educational distributors in attendance, more than 20 seminars and workshops. For more information: National Educational Film and Video Festival, 655 13th St., Oakland, CA 94612-1220. 510/465-6885. Fax: 510/465-2835.

AFI Los Angeles Film Festival.

June. A non-competitive fest presented by the American Film Institute, screens 16 and 35mm features, documentaries and shorts. For more information: AFI Fest, 2021 N. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027. 213/856-7707. Fax: 213/462-4049.

Atlanta Film and Video Festival.

June. Celebrates its 18th year of "promoting and supporting film and video as an art form." For more information: IMAGE Film/Video Center, 75 Bennett St., N.W., Suite M-1, Atlanta, GA 30309. 404/352-4225. Fax: 404/352-0653.

Connecticut Gay and Lesbian Film and Video Festival.

June 3-11, Hartford, Conn. Films and videos with gay or lesbian content. For more information: Alternatives, c/o Tyler Polhemus, 51 Oxford St., Hartford, CT 06105. 203/231-8558.

Television Program Competition, Banff Festival of Television.

June 5-11, Banff, Alberta. Includes made-for-TV movies, mini-series, children's programs, arts documentaries, performance specials. For more information: Banff Television Festival, P.O. Box 1020, Banff, Alberta, Canada T0L 0C0. 403/762-3060. Fax: 403/762-5357.

classifieds

International Guide to Periodicals of Interest to Feminists, Lesbians and Gay Men. Hundreds listed. Send \$9 to: Tsunami Records, P.O. Box 42282, Tucson, AZ 85733.

Short films wanted. Visionary Films is seeking short films by African-American filmmakers for possible distribution. Send VHS copy with SASE to Visionary Films, 6230 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 123, Los Angeles, CA 90048. For more information: 213/857-8151.

San Francisco International Lesbian & Gay Film Festival.

June 9-19. The world's oldest and largest event of its kind, shows films and videos by and about lesbians and gay men, especially encourages work by women and people of color. For more information: Frameline, Festival Entry, 346 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103. 415/703-8650.

U.S. International Film and Video Festival.

June 1-2, Elmhurst, Illinois. Showcases business, sponsored, television and industrial audio visual productions. Categories include advertising, agriculture, art, manufacturing, TV documentaries, video news releases, PSAs and home videos. For more information: J.W. Anderson, U.S. International Film and Video Festival, 841 N. Addison Ave., Elmhurst, IL 60126-1291. 708/834-7773. Fax: 708/834-5565.

Asian-American International Film Festival.

July, New York City. Sponsored by Asian Cine Vision. The oldest showcase for works by established and emerging Asian and Asian-American filmmakers. Features and shorts included. For more information: Asian Cine Vision, 32 E. Broadway, 4th Floor, New York NY, 10002. 212/925-8685. Fax: 212/925-8157.

publications

Alternative Filmworks. A collection of independent and experimental films on video.

For a free catalog, call 800/797-FILM. For more information: Alternative Filmworks Inc., 259 Oakwood Ave., State College, PA

Moving Pictures by Anne Hollander. The scholar explores the relationship between film and paintings. For more information: Harvard University Press, 79 Garden St., Cambridge, MA 02138-9904. Fax: 800/962-4983.

opportunities

American Cinematheque.

Seeking short films to screen as part of monthly film series at the Directors Guild. For more information: Programming Manager, American Cinematheque, 1717 Highland, Suite 814, Hollywood, CA 90028.

Black Entertainment Television.

Seeks films and TV projects by black independent filmmakers or producers. For more information: Black Entertainment Television, 1899 9th St., NE, Washington, DC 20018. 202/636-2400.

Bravo.

Invites submissions for "Unfinished Stories," an annual telethon designed to raise awareness and money for AIDS caregiving and research organizations. For more information: Amy Briamonte, Bravo, 150 Crossways Park W. Woodbury, NY 11797. 516/364-2222.

The Coalition vs. PBS

Censorship. Seeks high-quality documentaries for its "Banned by PBS Film Festival." Must have been rejected for national PBS feed. Send VHS tapes for viewing with description of the program and reason for PBS rejection, length, formats available, and filmmaker and distributor information. For more information: Coalition vs. PBS Censorship, P.O. Box 291555, Hollywood, CA 90029. 310/288-6693.

The Education Project.

Seeks films and video artists who work in teams with teenagers to document their perspectives of NYC streets and neighborhoods. For more information: The Education Project, c/o NYFA, 155 Ave. of the Americas, 14th Fl., New York, NY 10013. 718/398-0103.

The E-Team.

Seeks films and videos for children's TV show with environmental themes. For more information:

David Calderwood, Ero-Pacific Productions. 908/530-4451.

Fanlight Productions. Seeks new works on health care, mental health, disabilities, sexuality and related issues. For more information: Fanlight Productions, 47 Halifax St., Boston, MA 02130. 800/937-4113.

The Funding Exchange. National network of alternative funds is seeking volunteers to serve on its boards. The Saguaro Fund supports community organizing, primarily in and by communities of color or in working class/low income neighborhoods. The OUT Fund for Lesbian and Gay Liberation supports radical organizing against homophobia. The Paul Robeson Fund for Independent Media supports film and video and radio productions on social and political issues. Each grantmaking board is made up of activists with significant experience in the field and a proven commitment to progressive social change activism.

Board members serve three-year terms. They review proposal material, conduct phone interviews and meet once a year to make grant decisions, usually in New York. The boards may also meet a second time each year, for training or strategy sessions.

Nominations are always welcome. For more information: Funding Exchange, 666 Broadway, No. 500, New York, NY 10012. 212/529-5300.

Home Girl Productions. Seeks home movie footage by amateur and professional women filmmakers in compiling "Scenes for Our Personal Daily Lives," a film project that shows lesbians in their real life, celebrating the diversity of the community, both the outrageous and the mundane. For more information: HGP, 662 N. Robertson Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90069. 310/859-9013.

Independent Agent. Seeks narrative and documentary productions, 30 minutes and longer for distribution in Latin America. Contact: Rodrigo Jacomet, 818/799-7182.

Latino Collaborative and Downtown Community TV Center. Seeks new works by Latino film and videomakers for bi-monthly screenings. For more information: Euridice Arratia, Latino Collaborative, 280 Broadway, Rm. 412, New York, NY 10007. 212/732-1121.

Native Voices. Seeking proposals for two half-hour cultural affairs programs by and for Montana Native Americans. For

more information: Native Voices Public Television Workshop, Dept. of Film & TV, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT 59717. 406/994-6223.

NEA Film/Video Production. Organization grants for production of video and film (\$25,000-\$75,000). Generally support single production in 16mm or Super-8 film, Hi-8, 3/4" or VHS cassettes, or laser disc. Must emphasize use of the media as artforms. For more information: NEA, Media Programs, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Room 720, Washington, DC 20506. 202/682-5452.

Offline. Seeks video works by regional and national artists for experimental show that airs weekly on access channels in New York State, Milwaukee, Wis., and San Francisco. Submissions should not exceed 20 min. For more information: Offline, c/o Greg Bowman, 203 Pine Tree Rd., Ithaca NY 14850.

Open Wide. Seeks submissions of 30 sec. to 20 min. on 16mm, VHS, Hi8 or 3/4". The concept of this half-hour Canadian TV series is to stretch the perceptions of conventional television. For more information: CBC Manitoba, 541 Portage Ave., Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3B 2G1, Canada. 204/788-3111.

PMS (Post-Modern Sisters). Touring exhibition looking for innovative short films by women. For more information: PMS, 728 Treat Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94110. Lisa Austin, 415/648-381 or Susanne Fairfax, 415/751-3507.

Paul Robeson Fund for Independent Media. Seeks proposals from independent film, video and radio producers. Open to all producers of social issue media. For more information: Funding Exchange, 666 Broadway, No. 500, New York, NY 10012. 212/529-5300.

Tricoastal Films. Seeks short films by women for possible broadcast. All genres accepted. Send VHS copy. For more information: L. Bernhardt, Tricoastal Films, 3 Sheridan Square, New York, NY 10014.

Windows Media Resource. Seeks film and video listings for a Media Directory of independently produced programs for school age youth. Listings are free and should be appropriate for K-12 grades. For more information: Windows Media Resource, 323 Piper St., Healdsburg, CA 95448.

ANGLES

Display Advertising Rates

ANGLES is a quarterly newsletter devoted to bringing readers news and information of women working in film and video at all levels of production. Our subscribers include filmmakers, video artists, technicians, cinematographers, programmers, distributors, libraries, university film departments and media arts organizations. If you would like to reach this audience, consider the following:

Full page:	\$350
Half page:	\$200
Quarter page:	\$100
Eighth page:	\$75
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All copy must be camera ready. **ANGLES** offers a 10% discount for consecutive insertions. Payment for all ads must be made in advance.

Classified ads

The cost of each classified advertisement is \$15 per issue for 25 words or less. Each additional word is 50 cents. Send typed copy only. Submit exact copy. Payment must be made in advance with each entry.

Make checks payable to **ANGLES**. For more information: Elfrieda Abbe, **ANGLES**, P.O. Box 11916, Milwaukee, WI 53211. Phone/fax: 414/963-8951.

Women Make Movies.

Seeks submissions of films and videos that include video and filmographies, bibliographical information and data for women of color media arts database. For more information: Dorothy Thigpen, Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, 5th Fl., New York, NY 10013. 212/925-0606. Fax: 212/925-2052.

World African Network. 24-hour, pay cable channel, offering programming made by, for and about people of African descent, is screening films and videos for possible licensing. Programming will include children's programs, fiction films, sports, music, news and informational shorts from the African diaspora. For more information: World African Network, 5120 Goldleaf Circle, Suite 380, Los Angeles, CA 90056. 213/229-3300. Fax: 213/229-3344. Or in NY, 212/316-6991. Fax: 212/316-6884.

Varied Directions International. Seeks films and videos on health and women's issues. For more information: Varied Directions International, 69 Elm St., Camden, ME 04843. 800/888-5236. Fax: 207/236-4512.

Visionary Films. Seeks

short films by African-American filmmakers for possible distribution. Send VHS copy with SASE. For more information: Visionary Films, 6230 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 123, Los Angeles, CA 90048. 213/857-8151.

Zia Film Distribution Company. Seeks commercial movies and programs, 60 minutes or more, for international licensing. For more information: Zia Film Distribution Company, 8306 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 690, Beverly Hills, CA 90211.

Coming up

Cinematographers

Shanghai '93

The making of
Warrior Marks



Like Water for Chocolate

The joy of cooking

B Y L A U R A E S Q U I V E L

Translated by Yareli Arizmendi

Thanks to the fruit borne by the tree of good and evil, Adam and Eve acquired the wisdom of the god who created them. It was this exorbitant, impulsive act that got them expelled from Paradise. From then on food, wisdom, and pleasure were incorporated and forever united within a literary creation. Later, I'm not sure why, it seems humanity pledged and has tried its best to separate these elements—that is, isolate thought, reason, study, knowledge on one side, and gastronomic and sexual pleasures on the other; somehow dividing the masculine and the feminine. The feminine being related to reproduction, life, death, the gut. The masculine referring to creative intelligence, order, the rational. The masculine as public and transcendent, the feminine as private and personal. Thus marking the difference between the passive and active principles. And ever since, literature can't decide what side it's on. It has leaned towards one side or the other, depending on the development of society.

It was during this development that mankind came to understand nature and its laws, but it did so only to the extent that it could transform it. It is often cited that the great civilizations were born the moment women discovered how to plant, and the tribe became sedentary and began to transform its environment. It was around fire, satisfying their need to eat in a planned, organized manner that man became a man. It was there that he learned the scientific principles he would later transfer and apply to books and universities.

When authorities in 17th century Mexico tried to intellectually repress the poet Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz, they forbid her to read books—as if knowledge and wisdom only could be found there. She took refuge in the kitchen, and of course, she continued to learn:

"I see that an egg consolidates if you fry it in lard or oil, but it crumbles when it's placed in syrup; I've noticed

that for sugar syrup to remain liquid, all you need is a little water where quince or other tart fruit has been soaked...And when I observe these things, I often think: If Aristotle had cooked, he would have written a lot more."

Recover the kitchen as a space of knowledge, where art and life originate. Where earthly elements join the air, the present and the past. Cooking conciliates the four elements of nature into one delicious dish. And I would add a fifth element, which is the emotional and sensual charge

each person transmits into the food at the time of its preparation.

It is this particular energy that converts the act of eating into an act of love. Where a couple's sexual roles are inverted, reverted and merged. The man becomes the passive receiver and the woman the active

giver. A woman's energy, blended in the smell, the taste, the textures, penetrates the body of the man, sultry, voluptuous, turning the pleasure of eating and the pleasure of sex into one and the same.

Here, there is no battle of the sexes. It has been settled. Only exhilarated joy remains. Let us encourage and rescue the ritual. And through it, let us recover the spirit. It is in our hands, man and woman's—you can't say we are sexist—the opportunity to return to the home we abandoned, but now we will do so consciously, on another level of awareness. We should fuse pleasure and knowledge, search for the secret formula found in the forbidden fruit, the secret bite that can take us back to Eden.

Maybe if we can reunite the active with the passive, the rational with the emotional, the masculine and the feminine in a joyous, luscious, lustful and orgiastic way, we can see a new civilization emerge, the new man, the new literature that speaks without bitterness, without shame, about the home, love, the kitchen and life.

This excerpt from the essay "Exquisite Intimacies: A Philosophical Dissertation About Cooking" is reprinted with permission of Laura Esquivel, who adapted her novel, Like Water for Chocolate, to the screen. Esquivel's philosophical article comes to Angles courtesy of Regional Editor Harriet Robbins.

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I N S I D E

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of society, the economy, culture, values, even every day life.

—MARIANNE EYDE, DIRECTOR
YOU ONLY LIVE ONCE / LA VIDA ES UNA SOLA

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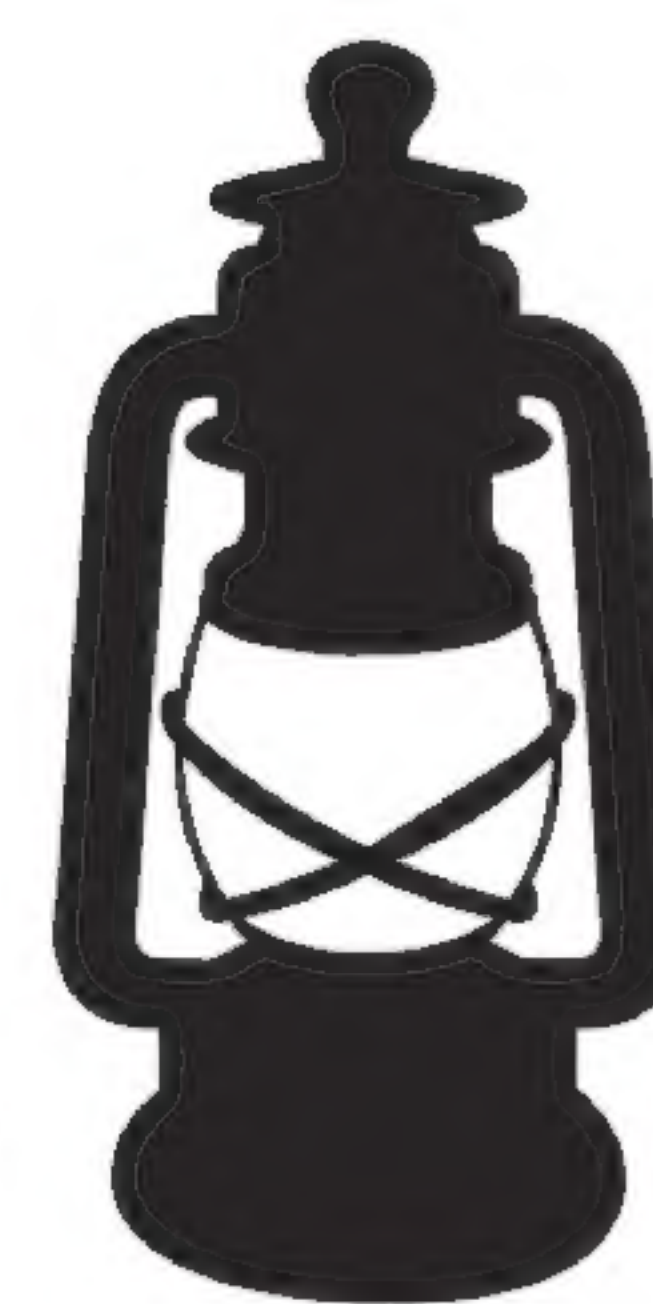


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